



Labor Market Analysis: 0113.00 – Food Processing and Related Technologies 01.1002 – Food Technology and Processing

Sustainable Food Systems – Certificate requiring 16 to < 30 semester units

Los Angeles Center of Excellence, August 2026

Program Endorsement:	Endorsed: All Criteria Met ☐	Endorsed: Some Criteria Met ☒	Not Endorsed ☐
Program Endorsement Criteria			
Supply Gap:	Yes ☒	No ☐	
Living Wage: (Entry-Level, 25 th)	Yes ☐	No ☒	
Education:	Yes ☒	No ☐	
Emerging Occupation(s)			
Yes ☐		No ☒	

SUMMARY

This report analyzes whether local labor market demand is being met by community college programs aligned with the identified middle-skill occupations¹ or whether a shortage of workers exists. Labor market demand is measured by annual job openings while education supply is measured by the number of awards (degrees and certificates) conferred on average each year.

Based on the available data, there appears to be a supply gap for the three identified middle-skill occupations in the region. While entry-level wages are lower than the self-sufficiency standard wage in both Los Angeles and Orange counties, two target occupations in this report count more than one-third of workers in the field who have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of educational attainment.

Recommendation: Due to two of three program endorsement criteria being met, the Los Angeles Center of Excellence for Labor Market Research (LA COE) endorses this proposed program.

Key Findings

Supply Gap

- 7,125 annual job openings are projected in the region through 2030. This number is greater than the three-year average of 7 awards conferred by educational institutions in the region.

¹ Middle-skill occupations typically require some postsecondary education, but less than a bachelor's degree. The COE classifies middle-skill jobs as the following:

- All occupations that require an educational requirement of some college, associate degree or apprenticeship;
- All occupations that require a bachelor's degree, but also have more than one-third of their existing labor force with an educational attainment of some college or associate degree; or
- All occupations that require a high school diploma or equivalent or no formal education but also require short- to long-term on-the-job training where multiple community colleges have existing programs.

Living Wage

- All three target occupations have entry-level wages **below** Los Angeles County's self-sufficiency standard hourly wage (\$24.03/hour).²

Educational Attainment

- 96% of the annual job openings typically require a high school diploma or equivalent for middle-skill occupations related to food processing in the LA/OC region.
- 37%-42% of *food science technicians* and *first-line supervisors of food preparation and serving workers* in the field have completed some college or an associate degree, according to national educational attainment data.
 - While only 15% of *farmworkers, farm, ranch, and aquacultural animals* have completed some college or an associate degree, 77% have completed a high school diploma or less educational attainment.

Community college supply

- No community colleges have issued awards related to food processing technology in the greater LA/OC region between 2023 and 2025.

Other postsecondary supply

- 1 educational institution in the LA/OC region has conferred awards in programs related to food technology and processing over the past three years.
- 7 bachelor's degrees were conferred on average each year by one postsecondary institution throughout the greater LA/OC region between 2022 and 2024.

TARGET OCCUPATIONS

LA COE prepared this report to provide regional labor market and postsecondary supply data related to three middle-skill occupations. [For full occupation descriptions, please see Appendix.](#)

- **Food Science Technicians (19-4013)**³
- **First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers (35-1012)**⁴
- **Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals (45-2093)**⁵

OCCUPATIONAL DEMAND

Exhibit 1 shows the five-year occupational demand projections for these middle-skill food processing occupations. In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, the number of jobs related to these occupations is projected to increase by 7% through 2030. There will be more than 7,100 job openings per year through 2030 due to job growth and replacements. The majority of jobs in 2025 for these middle-skill food processing occupations (72%) were located in Los Angeles County.

² Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington. (2024). *The self-sufficiency standard for California 2024*. <http://selfsufficiencystandard.org/California>.

³ [Agricultural and Food Science Technicians \(bls.gov\)](#)

⁴ [First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers \(bls.gov\)](#)

⁵ [Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals \(bls.gov\)](#)

Exhibit 1: Current employment and occupational demand, Los Angeles and Orange counties⁶

Geography	2025 Jobs	2030 Jobs	2025-2030 Change	2025-2030 % Change	Annual Openings
Los Angeles	32,051	34,210	2,159	7%	5,114
Orange	12,379	13,336	957	8%	2,011
Total	44,430	47,546	3,116	7%	7,125

Detailed Occupation Data

Exhibit 2 displays the current employment and projected occupational demand for each of the target occupations in Los Angeles County. The average percentage of workers aged 55+ across all occupations in the Los Angeles/Orange County region is 26%; occupations with a larger share of workers aged 55 and older typically have greater replacement needs to offset the amount of impending retirements. On average, 81% of workers across all occupations in California are employed full-time.

Exhibit 2: Detailed employment and occupational demand, Los Angeles County⁷

Occupation	2025 Jobs	2030 Jobs	5-Yr % Change	Annual Openings	% Aged 55 and older	% Full Time Workers
Food Science Technicians	702	688	(2%)	104	29%	100%
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	30,473	32,657	7%	4,881	21%	89%
Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals	876	866	(1%)	129	21%	Data unavailable
Total	32,051	34,210	7%	5,114	-	-

WAGES

The labor market endorsement in this report considers the entry-level hourly wages for these middle-skill food processing occupations in Los Angeles County as they relate to the county's self-sufficiency standard wage. Orange County wages are included below to provide a complete analysis of the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region.

Los Angeles County

All three occupations have entry-level wages below the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$24.03 in Los Angeles County). Typical entry-level hourly wages are in a range between \$16.52 and \$21.88. (Exhibit 3). Experienced *farm workers, farm, ranch, and aquacultural animals* workers can expect to earn \$20.36, which are lower than the self-sufficiency standard. However, experienced *food science technicians* and *first-line supervisors of food preparation and serving*

⁶ Five-year change represents new job additions to the workforce. Annual openings include new jobs and replacement jobs that result from retirements and separations.

⁷ Ibid.

workers can expect to earn wages between \$29.66 and \$30.99, which are higher than the self-sufficiency standard.

Exhibit 3: Earnings for occupations in Los Angeles County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)	Median Annual Earnings*
Food Science Technicians	\$21.88	\$25.96	\$30.99	\$54,000
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	\$21.77	\$22.82	\$29.66	\$47,500
Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals	\$16.52	\$17.07	\$20.36	\$35,500

*Rounded to the nearest \$100

Orange County

All three occupations have entry-level wages below the self-sufficiency standard wage for one adult (\$27.13 in Orange County). Typical entry-level hourly wages are in a range between \$16.52 and \$21.52 (Exhibit 4). Experienced *farmworkers, farm, ranch, and aquacultural animals* workers can expect to earn \$20.47, which is lower than the self-sufficiency standard. However, experienced *first-line supervisors of food preparation and serving workers* and *food science technicians* can expect to earn wages between \$28.47 and \$30.49, which are higher than the self-sufficiency standard.

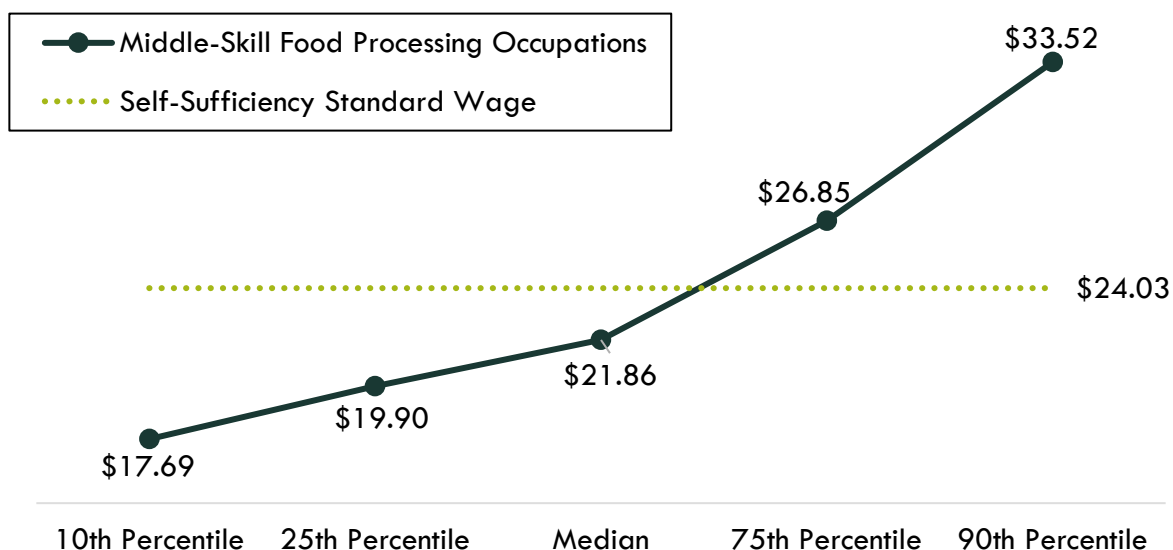
Exhibit 4: Earnings for occupations in Orange County

Occupation	Entry-Level Hourly Earnings (25 th Percentile)	Median Hourly Earnings	Experienced Hourly Earnings (75 th Percentile)	Median Annual Earnings*
Food Science Technicians	\$21.52	\$25.53	\$30.49	\$53,100
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	\$20.92	\$21.91	\$28.47	\$45,600
Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals	\$16.52	\$17.16	\$20.47	\$35,700

*Rounded to the nearest \$100

Across the greater Los Angeles and Orange County region, the average entry-level hourly earnings for the occupations in this report are \$19.90; this is below the living wage for one single adult in Los Angeles County (\$24.03). Exhibit 5 shows the average hourly wage for the occupations in this report, for entry-level to experienced workers.

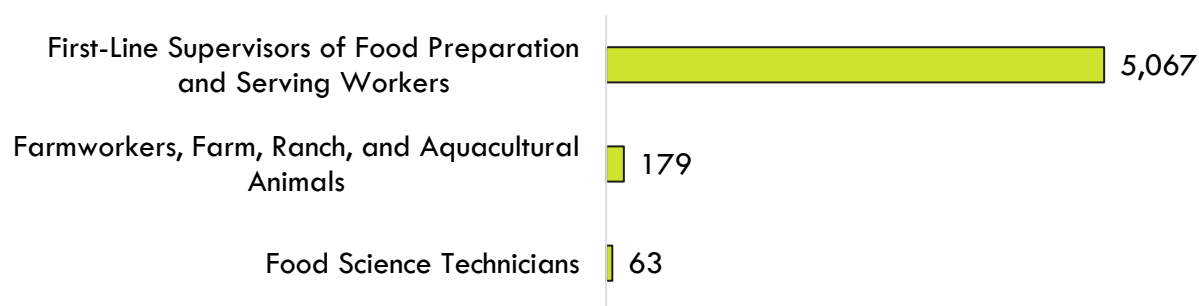
Exhibit 5: Average hourly earnings for target occupations, Los Angeles and Orange counties



JOB POSTINGS

There were 5,309 online job postings related to these target occupations listed in the past 12 months in Los Angeles and Orange counties. Exhibit 6 displays the number of job postings by occupation. The majority of job postings (96%) were for *first-line supervisors of food preparation and serving workers*, followed by *farmworkers, farm, ranch, and aquacultural animals* (3%) and *food science technicians* (1%).

Exhibit 6: Job postings by occupation (last 12 months), Los Angeles and Orange counties



Job postings were analyzed for the most common job titles, skills, and employers associated with the target occupations in this report (Exhibit 7).

Exhibit 7: Most commonly requested job titles, skills and employers in job postings, Los Angeles and Orange counties

Top Job Titles	Top Skills	Top Employers
• Shift leaders • Team leads • Shift supervisors • Food and beverage supervisors • Restaurant supervisors	• Restaurant operation • Food safety and sanitation • Food services • Lifting ability • Cash handling	• Taco Bell • El Pollo Loco • Panda Express • Raising Cane's • Compass Group • The Habit Burger Grill

In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, 43% of the target job postings listed a minimum educational requirement. Exhibit 8 details the number and percentage of job postings by educational level.

Exhibit 8: Education levels requested in job postings for target occupations, Los Angeles and Orange counties

Education Level	Job Postings	% of Job Postings
Bachelor's degree	427	18%
Associate degree	127	6%
High school diploma or vocational training	1,710	76%

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

In the greater Los Angeles/Orange County region, the majority of annual job openings (96%) typically require a high school diploma or equivalent (Exhibit 9). However, the national-level data indicates between 37% and 42% of *food science technicians* and *first-line supervisors of food preparation and serving workers* in the field have completed some college or an associate degree as their highest level of educational attainment. While only 15% of *farm workers, farm, ranch, and aquacultural animals* have completed some college or an associate degree, 77% have completed a high school diploma or less educational attainment. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) lists the following typical entry-level education levels for the occupations in this report:

Exhibit 9: Entry-level education preferred by employers nationally, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Occupation	Education Level
Food Science Technicians	Associate degree
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	High school diploma or equivalent
Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals	No formal educational credential

EDUCATIONAL SUPPLY

Community College Supply

In the past three years, there have been no awards conferred under the Food Processing and Related Technologies (0113.00) TOP Code in the Los Angeles/Orange County region. Two regional colleges offer Food Processing and Related Technologies (0113.00) programs that were approved in 2026 and have not yet conferred awards (Food Chemistry and Food, Science and Technology programs). Exhibit 10 displays the regional community colleges that offer programs related to food processing and the California community colleges that offer programs related to sustainable food systems.

Exhibit 10: Community college programs for food processing and/or sustainable food systems

TOP Code	TOP Title	Program	College	Award Type
0113.00	Food Processing and Related Technologies	Food Chemistry	LA City	Certificate
		Food, Science and Technology	LA City	Associate degree
1306.00	Nutrition, Foods, and Culinary Arts	Sustainable Food Systems	Saddleback	Certificate
1307.10	Restaurant and Food Services and Management	Sustainable Food and Beverage Management	Monterey Peninsula	Associate degree; Certificate

Other Postsecondary Supply

For a comprehensive regional supply analysis, it is important to consider the supply from other institutions in the region that provide training programs for middle-skill food processing occupations. Exhibit 11 shows the number of awards conferred by one institution in relevant programs. Due to different data collection periods, the most recent data is from 2022 to 2024. Between 2022 and 2024, other postsecondary college institutions in the region conferred an average of 7 bachelor's awards.

Exhibit 11: Other regional postsecondary awards, 2022-2024

CIP Code	Program	Postsecondary Institution	2021-22 Awards	2022-23 Awards	2023-24 Awards	3-Year Average
01.1002	Food Technology and Processing	CSU-Los Angeles	8	7	5	7
Supply Total/Average			8	7	5	7

APPENDIX: OCCUPATION DESCRIPTIONS

LA COE prepared this report to provide regional labor market supply and demand data related to these target occupations:

- **Food Science Technicians (19-4013)** Work with food scientists or technologists to perform standardized qualitative and quantitative tests to determine physical or chemical properties of food or beverage products. Includes technicians who assist in research and development of production technology, quality control, packaging, processing, and use of foods.⁸
- **First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers (35-1012)** Directly supervise, and coordinate activities of workers engaged in preparing and serving food.⁹
- **Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals (45-2093)** Attend to live farm, ranch, open range or aquacultural animals that may include cattle, sheep, swine, goats, horses and other equines, poultry, rabbits, finfish, shellfish, and bees. Attend to animals produced for animal products, such as meat, fur, skins, feathers, eggs, milk, and honey. Duties may include feeding, watering, herding, grazing, milking, castrating, branding, debeaking, weighing, catching, and loading animals. May maintain records on animals; examine animals to detect diseases and injuries; assist in birth deliveries; and administer medications, vaccinations, or insecticides as appropriate. May clean and maintain animal housing areas. Includes workers who shear wool from sheep and collect eggs in hatcheries.¹⁰

⁸ [Agricultural and Food Science Technicians \(bls.gov\)](https://www.bls.gov/occupations/19-4013)

⁹ [First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers \(bls.gov\)](https://www.bls.gov/occupations/35-1012)

¹⁰ [Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals \(bls.gov\)](https://www.bls.gov/occupations/45-2093)

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DATA SOURCES

POWERED BY



- O*NET Online
- Lightcast (formerly Emsi)
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
- California Employment Development Department, Labor Market Information Division, OES
- California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Management Information Systems (MIS)
- Self-Sufficiency Standard at the Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington
- Chancellor's Office Curriculum Inventory (COCI 2.0)

Important Disclaimer: All representations included in this report have been produced from primary research and/or secondary review of publicly and/or privately available data and/or research reports. Efforts have been made to qualify and validate the accuracy of the data and the reported findings; however, neither the Centers of Excellence, COE host District, nor California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office are responsible for applications or decisions made by recipient community colleges or their representatives based upon components or recommendations contained in this study.

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